

Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization

Policy Board Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2025, 10:00 a.m.

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission
112 MacTanly Place, Staunton, Virginia

Attendance

Voting Members		Non-Voting Members		Other Attendees	
City of Staunton		VDOT		Staff (CSPDC)	
✓	Amanda Kaufman	✓	Shane McCabe (Alt)	✓	Ann Cundy
✓	Brad Arrowood (Chair)			✓	Zach Beard
	Rodney Rhodes (Alt)	DRPT		✓	Devon Thompson
Augusta County			Grace Stankus	✓	Paula Melester
	Tim Fitzgerald	Virginia Regional Transit		✓	Garreth Bartholomew
✓	Carolyn Bragg	✓*	Steve Wilson		
	Pam Carter (Alt)		Phil Thompson (Alt)		
City of Waynesboro		Department of Aviation			
✓*	Jim Wood (Vice Chair)	✓*	Rusty Harrington	Others	
✓	Todd Wood	FHWA and FTA			
	Michael Hamp (Alt)		Chelsea Beytas		
VDOT			Kevin Jones		
	Todd Stevens				
	Brad Reed (Alt)				
✓	Don Komara (Alt)				
✓	Cody Huffman				

*Virtual attendance

Call to Order

The Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (SAWMPO) Policy Board meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chair Brad Arrowood.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Arrowood presented the minutes from the March 19, 2025, Policy Board meeting.

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Todd Wood; seconded by Ms. Amanda Kaufman. The Board approved the motion by unanimous vote.

Public Comment

Chair Arrowood opened the meeting for public comment. There were no public comments.

SAWMPO Draft FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Release for Public Comment and Conditional Approval (TAC Action Form #25-02)

Mr. Zach Beard presented the draft FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Mr. Beard explained that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) had reviewed the document and recommended that the Board release it for a 21-day public comment period with conditional approval pending no public comments received during that period.

Mr. Beard reminded the Board that the UPWP is the MPO's annual work plan and budget detailing upcoming fiscal year activities. The budget includes funding sources (federal, state, and local) through major work activity line items: administration and public engagement, long-range planning covering the LRTP, short-range planning covering small area studies, local assistance, and transit planning assistance.

Mr. Beard noted that a draft overview of the budget was presented at the February meetings, and the Board must approve the document by the end of the current fiscal year. The FY 2025 and FY 2026 budgets were displayed for comparison, with Mr. Beard noting that the 5303 funding carryover amount (\$40,000) was an estimate that would be finalized in the coming months, though no significant changes were anticipated.

Mr. Beard explained that the current fiscal year work focused on updating the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and assisting the City of Staunton with a BUILD application. For the upcoming fiscal year, work would focus on completing the LRTP and starting a new small area study for the City of Staunton in January 2026.

Mr. Beard added that since the draft was mailed out, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) suggested incorporating a few minor adjustments, primarily including the USDOT Federal transportation planning goals. A revised document incorporating the FTA changes will be released to the public.

A motion to release the draft for public comment and conditionally approve the document pending no comments was made by Mr. Todd Wood; seconded by Ms. Carolyn Bragg. The motion passed unanimously.

Presentation: 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan Phase II Public Engagement Summary

Mr. Beard summarized the Phase II public engagement activities for the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan, which focused on gathering input on the draft list of projects and studies for each of the three localities through a public survey and LRTP plan information released on the Social Pinpoint 2050 LRTP page. Mr. Beard noted that the public survey closed on March 31, and that during the month-and-a-half period, the MPO held three public engagement events at YMCAs in Staunton and Waynesboro, and at Stuart's Draft High School.

Mr. Beard described the interactive project map where the public could provide direct feedback on proposed projects and studies. Survey results included 201 contributions. Overall support for projects was high, with nearly 90% average support across all projects. Sixteen of the 23 projects received 100% support, though intersection projects generally received less support than other types.

Mr. Beard then detailed projects by locality:

Augusta County Projects:

- Of the County's 10 projects, the highest-rated project was the U.S. 250 safety improvements west of Waynesboro, which includes installing a raised median on Jefferson Highway between Goose Creek Road and Chandelle Boulevard, a five-foot sidewalk along the north side, and signal timing adjustments.
- Lower-rated projects (still with approximately 85% support) were two roundabout projects: one at Tinkling Springs Road/Exit 227 northbound ramp and another at Route 256 and Route 11.

City of Staunton Projects:

- Of the City's 7 projects, the highest-rated project was the Greenville Avenue improvements at Amherst/Statler/Ritchie, which includes establishing a signal for westbound right turns, extending the right-turn island, installing new crosswalks, sidewalks, and a raised median.
- Three projects received less than 85% support: Greenville Avenue/Coalter/Commerce (only 16% support), the West Beverly/North Jefferson roundabout, and the Churchville Avenue/Thornrose project. Mr. Beard noted that the Greenville/Coalter/Commerce project had the lowest support of any regional project, possibly because it was originally intended to work with a roundabout that is no longer advancing.

City of Waynesboro Projects:

- Of the 6 projects, the highest-rated project was the Rockfish Gateway shared-use path, which received enthusiastic support.
- Three projects received less than 85% support: intersection improvements at Delphine and Hopeman Parkway (60% support, the second-lowest overall), the new connector between Lou DeWitt and Rosser, and the Exit 96 ramp improvement. Comments on the Delphine/Hopeman project suggested it wasn't impactful enough to justify the investment.

Mr. Beard also summarized the input received from each of the study ideas. The highest rated studies by locality were the Augusta County Greenway Study in Augusta County, the Frontier Drive Improvements Study in Staunton, and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Study in Waynesboro.

Mr. Beard explained that the public input would inform decisions about which projects to include in the LRTP, with consideration given to the Staunton project at Greenville/Coalter/Commerce due to its low support and the absence of the planned roundabout. Mr. Beard noted that this input would be combined with quantitative scoring being conducted with Kimley-Horn.

Ms. Paula Melester highlighted the success of the YMCA events in reaching people who otherwise would not have known about the planning process. Ms. Melester emphasized the value of meeting people where they are rather than expecting them to attend dedicated events.

Agency Updates

VDOT

Mr. Shane McCabe provided the following updates:

- I-81 Corridor Improvement Plan study is underway for the entire I-81 corridor, with an online survey and interactive map available for public input. Public outreach is planned for summer 2025, with final corridor-wide public engagement scheduled for fall 2025
- Project Pipeline has initiated the U.S. 340/Rosser Avenue study, with scope finalization expected by the end of April and data collection and public input planned for summer
- Revenue Sharing and Transportation Alternatives pre-applications are open from April 1 to May 30
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Mr. Don Komara provided the following updates:

- VDOT Six-Year Improvement Plan meeting is scheduled for May 15th at Blue Ridge Community College
- I-81 work with Branch Highways from mile marker 233.5 to 238 is progressing well, with shoulder widening completed and barrier installation planned for late April. Speed limit is reduced to 60 mph through the work zone
- I-81 improvements from Exit 225 to 221 (through Staunton) are making good progress with significant earthwork and bridge widening
- Barterbrook Road project is ahead of schedule
- Waynesboro Southern Connector is nearly complete, pending final pavement work
- Crosswalk improvements in Stuart's Draft are in progress with curb cuts being installed
- New flashing signals are operational at the intersection of Routes 608 and 610

Chair Arrowood inquired about the projected completion date for the Barterbrook Road project, and Mr. Komara indicated it was expected to be complete by the end of summer and is approximately 20-25% ahead of schedule.

DRPT

Mr. Beard reported on DRPT updates on behalf of Ms. Grace Stankus, which included the following:

- DRPT has released its draft FY 2026 SYIP, and the public is invited to provide feedback on recommended rail and transit projects at the upcoming Staunton district meeting on May 15 at Blue Ridge Community College at 4:00 p.m.
- DRPT is extending the deadline for 5303 applications to June 2nd since they have not received full 5303 apportionments from FTA

BRITE Transit and Afton Express

Ms. Devon Thompson provided the following updates:

- The CSPDC received a civic improvement commendation from the Garden Club of America for the Lewis Street Hub, with the Augusta Garden Club chapter nominating it for its use of native plants
- The BRITE microtransit feasibility study analyzing potential on-demand service models is nearing completion. Priority zones including North Staunton, South Waynesboro, Fishersville, and Stuart's Draft have been analyzed with high-level recommendations for service delivery. Final recommendations will be presented to the BRITE Transit Advisory Committee on May 21st
- The 2024 Afton Express annual report has been finalized and distributed



- Technical assistance has been secured to analyze Afton Express ridership data and customer input to consider service changes that better align with current work schedules and passenger needs, recognizing that work patterns have changed since the service launched during the pandemic

Locality Updates

Augusta County

Ms. Bragg reported that the County held a ceremony for the new courthouse, with the final beam set in place. The estimated completion is expected by the end of the year, with move-in planned for early 2026. Ms. Bragg noted that construction is on schedule.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Upcoming Meetings

Chair Arrowood noted that the next TAC meeting is scheduled for May 7, 2025, and the next Board meeting is scheduled for May 21, 2025. Additionally, the VDOT SYIP meeting is scheduled for May 15, 2025, at Blue Ridge Community College.

Meeting Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Arrowood adjourned the meeting at 10:46 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paula Melester". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paula Melester
Director of Transportation
